

Chester County Prison
235 West Market Street
(Northeast Corner of Market
and New Streets)
West Chester
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1134

HABS
PA
15-WCHES
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

CHESTER COUNTY PRISON

Location: 235 West Market Street (Northeast Corner of Market and New Streets), West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: County of Chester, 10 North High Street, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Present Occupant and Use: Demolished 1960.

Statement of Significance: This building is a good example of prison architecture of the middle third of the nineteenth century and was built in the best possible manner from the design of Thomas U. Walter.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: County of Chester, Pennsylvania.
2. Date of erection: 1838 at an estimated cost of \$35,949; actual cost \$39,021.82.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Thomas U. Walter designed the building for a fee of \$1500. William Ingram and Chalkley Jefferis were the contractors.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: Walter's original floor plans not found. Detailed specifications are in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania (see Part I, C of this report). Additional cells have been added, but the original front building and warden's home remain with few changes that can be seen.
5. Alterations and additions: Enlarged 1871 at a cost of \$12,588.54 - 18 new cells. Stone work by John Coburn, brick work by Taylor and Hampton, carpenter work by Joseph Hunt. Bricks from the yard of H. R. Gus, West Chester. Although there have been numerous changes since then, the exterior has hardly been touched except for a porch to the warden's quarters and a new gate into the prison yard on the Market Street side. In 1876 a new heating system was put in, and electricity was introduced in 1885.

6. Important old views and references: Water color dated 1839 and signed by J. R. Smith, the original in the office of the Prison. Cut on the "Map of Chester County, Pennsylvania" by T. J. Kennedy - R. L. Barnes, Philadelphia, 1856. Copy in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa. J. Smith Futhy and Gilbert Cope, History of Chester County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, Pa.: Louis H. Everts, 1881), facing page 119. Numerous later pictures in the files of the Chester County Historical Society.

Sources of information all to be found in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa., unless otherwise noted.

Lindsay, G. Carroll. Athens on High Street--The Architectural Works of Thomas U. Walter in West Chester, Pennsylvania. University of Delaware: Typed thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, 1955.

Copy in the University Library, Newark, Delaware.

Classified printed and manuscript files in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa., under heading Public offices - Prison.

Futhy, J. Smith and Cope, Gilbert. History of Chester County, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pa.: Louis H. Everts, 1881.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

In July, 1836 Thomas U. Walter submitted plans and over a year later (August, 1837) specifications for the new County Prison. The County Commissioners desired a prison to be based on the Eastern Penitentiary and the then new Moyamensing Prison. Much local interest had been shown on prison reform, in a great part due to the strong Quaker element in the county. Copies of the contract and the specifications are included under Part I, C of this report, the originals of both being in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa. Hangings took place in the Prison yard until 1912.

C. Supplemental Material:

1. "West Chester July 7, 1836
To the Commissioners of Chester County Pa.
Gentlemen
In compliance with your request I
herewith submit a plan and elevation for the Chester county
Prison.

I have estimated the expense of executing the work in accordance with said design and find that the whole will cost \$32,000, understanding that all the exterior will be composed of rubble, masonry except the Entrance porch, which I propose to construct of hewn granite - All the cell doors and windows to be faced with iron, the galleries to be supported on iron brackets, and all the necessary arrangements to be made for heating, hydrants, water closets &c - I have also calculated for covering the roof with leaded tin or zink

All of which is respectfully submitted

With great regard

Your ob. serv.

Tho. U. Walter Arch

To Jno Mellin

Walker Yarnall

& S. Taylor Esquire

Commissioners of Chester Co."

/From original manuscript in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

2. "Specifications for building Chester County Prison at West Chester, Pa.

August 30, 1837

The whole work to be executed according to the plans furnished by the Architect, and every part of the building to be done under his directions and subject to his approval together with the approval of the Commissioners of Chester County.

The dimensions and form of the building and enclosing walls to be the same as are represented by the drawings.

All the outside wall to be 2 ft. 4 in. thick above the ground and 2.10 below - All the partition walls to be of Stone 1.4 in. thick except the Corridor walls which will be composed of bricks - The exterior walls will all be composed of good rubble Stone well laid in strong mortar and pointed on the outside - The chimneys will all be built to bricks and the fireplaces Rumfordized.

The Prison to be heated by means of warm air generated by 4 furnaces: - a cellar will be made under the whole corridor, and the furnaces placed at each end - the smoke flues of one end will be carried horizontally through the Air Chamber to the other end to assist in equalizing the heat - these flues to be covered substantially with cast iron plates similar to those of the new county prison and vagrants apartment at Philadelphia. The furnaces to be of S. P. Morris' construction and so arranged as to be used separately or together.

Flues to be constructed in the corridor walls of nine inches square to convey the heat to each cell, and the

apertures in the cells to be finished with revolving grates fixed in runs of cast iron 4 inches deep: - all the flues to be worked with 'followers.'

A flue for ventilation to be carried from the ceiling of each cell to the roof of the building and 'topped' out like a chimney.

Each cell to have a hole through the outside wall near the floor for the admission of cold air, these flues to be secured with cast iron funnels similar to those of the vagrants apartment at Philadelphia.

Each cell to have a Hydrant with a brass ground 'bib-cock' of the best quality, and a water closet with horizontal pipes of 8 inches calibre similar to those of the Eastern Penitentiary and the new County prison aforesaid.

All the hydrants and water closets to be supplied with water from reservoirs to be placed near the roof of the building: these reservoirs to be lined with lead and furnished with brass ground valves, cocks, ball cocks, over flow pipes and all the necessary machinery for supplying the hydrants, cleaning the water closets &c. the rain water from the roof to be turned into these reservoirs.

Each of the water closet pipes to be emptied by a toggle jointed lever stop cock, similar to those of the aforesaid new County Prison.

The cell doors to be fixed in cast iron frames similar to those of the Eastern Penitentiary - the inside doors to consist of iron grates hung on pivots with a small wicket gate near the top to feed the prisoners through: - the outside doors to be oak or Carolina pine with a substantial lock and latch on each, of the best American manufacture.

Each cell to be 9 feet wide, 9 feet high, and 12 feet long in the clear - the flooring to consist of seasoned oak joists 12 inches deep and 16 inches from centre to centre, the whole substantially counter ceiled with stone and mortar - the floors will be first quality Carolina pine boards free from sap and unsound knots.

All the cell doors to open in the corridor, those of the 2d & 3d stories to be approached by means of galleries to be supported on strong cast iron brackets running through the walls.

The floors of the galleries to be 2-1/3 inch white pine plank - the balusters to be of iron with a substantial hand rail.

The block of cells to be 3 stories high each ten feet from floor to floor and the descent of the roof 5 feet - the height of the front building will be according to the front elevation.

A cellar of 8 feet in the clear to be made under the whole of the front building, but no cellar under the cells.

The whole establishment to be roofed with metalized tin or zink.

A coal grate and marble mantel to be placed in the keepers parlour.

The front door to be 4 inches thick lined with boiler iron and secured with a substantial lock and bolts - all the locks in the building to be of the best American manufacture.

The whole work to be well plastered and painted, and the glass to be best American manufacture.

The cell windows to be 3 feet high cased with iron, with a sash to open inside similar to those of the vagrants apartment at Philadelphia.

The corridor to be paved with bricks, and to be lighted by horizontal sky lights placed upon the roof, and so arranged as to be raised by small cords from the galleries - there will be 8 of these lights each of which will consist of a single plate of glass 1/2 inch thick 2 ft. 6 in. long & 14 in. wide.

The Portico at the front door to be composed of Chissel dressed Granite and the steps to be of the same material.

All the details of the building, the character of the work and the finish of the various parts not here specified will be similar to the finish of the aforesaid New County Prison at Philadelphia.

Tho. U. Walter, Archt.
Phila., Aug 30/37"

/From original manuscript in Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

3. "Specifications for a County Prison in West Chester Pa.
Tho. U. Walter architect Phil: March 27/28

Cellars to be made under every part of the building except 14 of the cells as indicated on the 'plans of the foundations', these cellars to be seven feet in the clear. - Foundations for all the cellar walls to be dug one foot below the bottom of the cellars, and for the Yard walls at least four feet below the surface of the ground.

All the walls to be constructed to the depth, height and thickness described on the several plans, elevations and sections, and to be composed of the best rubble stone well laid in mortar consisting of sharp sand or gravel and wood burnt lime, except the corridor walls of the cells which will be composed of bricks for the purpose of affording facility for constructing the flues - All the flues for ventilation and heat to be built around followers.

All the walls of the building to be pointed on the outside and well dashed on the inside, and all the yard walls to be well pointed on both sides.

All the foundations to be composed of large building stone well bedded in mortar.

The frontispiece around the front door, the steps, cheek blocks, window heads and sills and the water table to the

height of 2f."8 inches to be composed of best granite, finely wrought and well laid, jointed and penciled the shafts of the columns to be composed of a single piece.

Note. The estimate for the Granite frontispiece should be kept separate so as to afford a choice of either adopting it or dispensing with it.

All the doorways of the cells to be trimmed with cast iron frames and secured on the outside with substantial yellow pine or oak doors with strong locks and latches of american manufacture; and to have inside doors of wrought iron composed of bars $3/8$ by 2 inches and three inches apart, with connecting kneed bolts so as to fasten up and down and sideways at the same time, these bolts to be so arranged as to be secured by the outside locks.

The cell windows to be four inches wide by 3.6 high and to have a facing of cast iron of 6 inches on the square and 6 inches on the splay thus these windows as well as the doors to be exactly similar in every particular to those of the New County Prison at Philadelphia.

The cells to be warmed by means of furnaces constructed according to plans No. 2; - the horizontal smoke pipes or flues c.c.c.c. are to be formed of bricks and covered with cast iron plates secured together with screws and arranged like those of the new vagrants apartment at Philadelphia.

A separate flue for ventilation to be constructed from the apex of the arch in each room and carried up to the top of the building and topped out as an ordinary chimney with a flat stone on the top of the weths to prevent the rain beating down.

Flues for conveying the warm air to the cells, will be constructed from the apex of arch in the air chamber to each cell and the outlet secured with a cast iron revolving valve fixed in a circular frame similar to those of the vagrants apartment in Philadelphia.

Flues of six inches in diameter for admitting cold air into the cells to be made through the outside wall and secured around with cast iron-these flues to be formed with a knee of 18 inches long thus, for the purpose of preventing the communication of sound from one cell to another.

Each cell to be furnished with a brass ground bib cock hydrant supplied from a half inch branch from an inch and a quarter leader main-these mains to extend along the corridor walls under the door sills in every story and to communicate with reservoirs in the third story.

The reservoirs to be four in number, and to be fixed in the front cells of the 3rd story, two will be arranged for the hydrants and two for the Water closets: - the reservoirs for the hydrants will be 4 feet deep 8 feet long and 2 feet wide, and those for the water closets 12 ft. long

6 feet deep and 4 feet wide; they must all be lined with thick sheet lead and furnished with all the valves, cocks, levers, pullies & necessary to perfect the arrangement Similar to that of the Philadelphia County Prison.

Each cell will be furnished with a water closet similar to those in all the Philadelphia Prisons-the pipes to be all of the best iron 8 inches calibre and 5/8 thick with good sound hubs and substantial lead joints-the stop cocks for letting off the water to be like those of the Phila county Prison.

The cell doors will be approached by means of galleries of 3 feet in width composed of 2 inch cedar or white pine plank planned on both sides and supported on cast iron brackets 3 feet apart-these galleries to be finished with a handrail supported on square wrought iron ballusters secured in every bracket.

The corridor to be lighted by 10 horizontal sky lights placed upon the roof and arranged with toggle jointed levers so as to be raised by means of small cords from the galleries; each skylight to consist of a single light of thick glass secured in a wooden frame and fastened to the roof with hinges.

The roof will consist of spruce pine rafters sheathed with boards suitable for the purpose and securely covered with the best 'musselman' zink - the conductors to be composed of tin not less than four inches in diameter.

All the cells to be vaulted with quick arches and the abutments filled up solid with bricks well laid in mortar: - the two end cells in every story to be groin arched and strapped all around with iron bars 3/4 of an inch by three, secured around stone posts so as to prevent lateral pressure on the end walls, - none of the apartments in the front building will be arched with bricks; the groin over the vestibule will be made of wood plastered.

All the floors in the whole establishment to be composed of Carolina pine or Oak, grooved and tongued.

The stairway in the front building to be composed of yellow pine with cherry rail square balusters and cherry newel - the stairs in the corridor to be composed of best heart pine with square wooden balusters and cherry rail.

The 6 windows at the end of the corridor the 4 in the back of the 1st story, the 3 in the 2nd story and 4 in the 3rd story to be each 12 lights 8 x 10 - The 6 windows in the front of the 1st story to be 12 lights 10 x 18 the 5 in the 2nd story to be 12 lights 10 x 17 the 5 in the front of the 3rd story to be 9 lights 10 x 16 and the 8 in the wings to be 3 lights 10 x 14.

All these windows to be secured with iron gratings; - the perpendicular bars to be one and a half inches square and five inches apart, and the horizontal bars to be 1/2 inch thick and 3 inches wide.

The four windows under the portico and on each side of the door into the corridor to be 2 feet wide and 6 feet high and to be secured with bars similar to the other windows.

The door opening into the corridor to be composed of wrought iron bars $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick 3 inches wide and 3 inches apart; and to be secured with a massy lock and bolt; the front door to be composed of oak lined with boiler iron and well studded with iron rivets. - The rest of the doors to be 2 inches thick, 4 pannels without mouldings; all the openings in the front building to be trimmed inside with flat ovels, and all the broad jambs to be plastered.

The two fireplaces in the front rooms lower story to have marble mantels to cost not less than \$30 each, and all the rest of the fireplaces to have plastered jambs with a marble shelf; - all the fireplaces in the building to be rumfordized with good stretchers and all the chimneys to be built of bricks.

All the cornices to be composed of wood, the joists of the first story to be oak well seasoned and those of the upper stories to be hemlock pine or oak - all the joists to be 3 x 12 and to be 16 inches from centre to centre.

The yard walls to be capped with wood and to project 2 feet inside of the walls - all these cappings to be secured to the walls by strong iron screws at least 2 feet long and eight feet apart - the roof of these walls to be covered with zink and the under side of the 2 feet projection to be plastered.

All the rooms and cells to be well plastered without stucco cornices and all the wood work to have 3 coats of paint of the best pure lead.

A strip of 4 feet wide to be paved with bricks around the whole building in the yard and the entire front pavement as well as the floor of the corridor to be paved with the first quality paving bricks.

All the cellar windows to be secured with window Bars at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches square and not more than 4 inches apart.

The whole of the work to be done under the direction and subject to the approval of the Architect and no extra charge to be made under any circumstances whatever.

Should the party of the second part at any time decide upon having any work done or materials furnished that are not included in the plans and these specifications, or should the party of the second part agree to dispense with any workmanship or materials included in the said plans and specifications; all such additions or deductions to be valued by the Architect and either taken from or added to the sum specified as the case may be, according to the aforementioned estimate of the Architect.

We hereby acknowledge the foregoing specifications as the paper alluded to in the contract we have signed this day

William Ingram
Chalkley Jefferis
J W Passmore
John Beitler

West Chester May 18. 1838"

/Original manuscript in possession of the Chester County
Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

4. "This agreement made the eighteenth day of May Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and thirty eight, between William Ingram and Chalkley Jefferis of the county of Chester of the one part; and 'The County of Chester' of the other part; witnesseth that the parties of the first part, in consideration of the matters hereinafter referred to and set out, covenant and agree to and with the party of the second part, to furnish and deliver the materials, and erect, at their own proper cost, on the lot recently purchased for that purpose at the north east corner of Market and New streets in the borough of West Chester, a county jail and workhouse, according to the plan and specifications furnished by Thomas U. Walter, architect, now in the possession of the Commissioners of said county; to commence the work without delay and prosecute it with all convenient despatch; to have the walls and building erected and under roof on or before the first day of January-next; to have the building and all necessary accompanying improvements embraced in the said plan and specifications fully completed on or before the first-day of January one thousand eight hundred and forty-; to procure all the iron pipes, lead pipes, and six large stop cocks to be used in the building, under the direction of the said architect; and faithfully, diligently, and in a good and workman-like manner under the controul and direction of the said Commissioners and their Architect, to do execute and perform the office work and labor above mentioned.

And the party of the second part, in consideration of the premises, covenants and agrees to pay to the parties of the first part, the sum of thirty five thousand, nine hundred and forty nine dollars, in such proportions and at such times as may be agreeable to the parties.

Provided however. That in case the party of the second part at any time be of opinion that this contract is not duly complied with by the said parties of the first part, or that it is not in due progress of execution, or that the said parties of the first part are iregular, or negligent, in such case the said party of the second part shall be authorized to declare this contract forfeited, and thereupon the same shall become null; and the parties of the first part shall have no appeal from the opinion and decision aforesaid and they hereby release all right to except to, or question the same in any place or under any

circumstances whatever; but the parties of the first part shall remain liable to the party of the second part for the damages occasioned to them by said non-compliance, irregularity or negligence.

And provided also, that in order to secure the faithful and punctual performance of the covenants above made by the parties of the first part, and to indemnify and protect the party of the second part from loss in case of default and forfeiture of this contract, the said party of the second part shall be authorized to retain---until the completion of the contract, fifteen per cent on the amount of moneys at any time due to the said parties of the first part.

In witness whereof the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hands and seals, and the party of the second part hath hereunto affixed the corporate seal of the County Commissioners attested by the signatures of the said Commissioners and their Clerk, the day and year first above written.

William Ingram
Chalkley Jefferis
J W Passmore
John Beitler
B. Parker
Clerk

Sealed & delivered in presence of
Wm Darlington
William Embree."

/Original manuscript in possession of Chester County
Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

5.

"Improvements at Our Prison.

The work of remodelling the kitchen department of our County Prison is progressing very fast, and bids fair to be completed in a week or two. The change and improvement is a very marked and creditable one and when finished will allow of prisoners being taken to and from their cells to work in the kitchen without their being brought in contact with the outer world, as is the case at present, and by which one or more prisoners have made their escape. The new kitchen will be formed out of what was the 'back office room,' and about two-thirds of the execution yard, and door-ways will lead therefrom into the prison corridor. The oven has already been removed to the new quarters, and the remaining portion of the yard yet devoted for executions is only about 12 x 15 feet in proportion, while over the whole a roof has been placed, so as to make the awful enclosure perfectly private. The old oven room will be fitted up as a sort of receptacle for such persons as may come under the head of 'drunk,' and the old kitchen department proper will be converted into an 'Inspection

Room.' The fitting up of the new kitchen is being done in such a manner as accords with good judgment, and when ready for use will be a long want well supplied."

Daily Local News, West Chester, Pa., November 1, 1875.]

6. "We observe the enterprising contractors are going on rapidly with rogue's new mansion house. We have observed several blocks of granite drawn past our door within the last week, designed for steps, columns, etc. This granite, we are told, is brought from way down east, the Maine quarries more than 500 miles distant, from whence it is brought cheaper than it can be gotten in this state."

Village Record, West Chester, Pa., July 31, 1838.]

7. "West Chester January 7. 1840
To the Commissioners of Chester County Pa.
Gentlemen

I have made a careful examination of the bill submitted by Ingram & Jefferis for extra work done and materials furnished in the construction of the Chester County Prison and find it composed of three kinds of charges; - the first embraces those that are covered by the contract and should not be paid for; - the second, those that were not called for by the contract, nor ordered by the Commissioners nor Architect, but that really make the building better; and the third of those that are truly extra, and of course should be paid for.

In order to bring the subject fully before you I have divided the bill into these three separate parts, each item of which I will now consider.

In the first division of the bill which includes such items as are not extras we have

- 1st. extra work on Blocking course and sills; neither of which contains the least extra work, as the drawings plainly show.
2. Head and sill corridor door. - No cheaper head and sill could be used than the one we have, and as the door could not be made without a head and sill of some kind, these items cannot be extra
3. Arch in cellar. This is a part of the Plan, it belongs to the building, and the design could not have been executed without it, and it should by no means be charged as an extra
4. An extra furnace; This charge is altogether out of the question; the prison could not be warmed at all without it, and it was originally intended to have two at each end, but instead of that we have two at one end, and one at the other. - The two fireholes do not certainly constitute two furnaces: They both stand in one chamber and together constitute one furnace. - But

even supposing the four mentioned in the contract to be construed into two as this extra charge implies, and the same clause in the contract settles the question by holding up the vagrants apartment at Phila as the pattern, of which these are exact duplicates.

5. Making large gate in Yard wall. This upon the whole is not an extra: - but it having been originally intended to make it on the eastern side, and upon consultation we decided that the Western side would be more convenient for the Prison, the Contractors were directed to be more particular with its strength and finish being on a street. I think therefore that the dressing should be paid for, the stone sill, which was a subsequent order and say \$25 for extra work on Arch, doors, and iron work, which make \$61.12 of this item to be paid and \$160.75 not to be paid.
6. Inside shutters in Vestibule. These shutters it is true are not particularly mentioned in the contract, neither are the nails, the hinges, the putty, and a thousand other things; but the house was to be made, and that too in the best manner, and these shutters are as necessary to its completion as any thing else.
7. Extra weight of Cell doors. This item is claimed because the Contract happens vaguely to mention a different sized iron from that used, but the clause finishes in these words 'the doors to be exactly similar in every particular to those of the New County Prison at Philadelphia.' The doors are exactly similar to those referred to, and of course nothing extra can be claimed.
8. Iron bars for Corridor walls. - These irons are necessary to the strength of the building, and as it was to be built in the most permanent manner, I know not how these bars can be extra work.

The second division of the bill contains those items that claim some consideration as to the propriety of making some allowance for them. The first charge is marked on the bill number

9. and consists of a charge for extra work on front. - That the building is the better in point of taste at least of this additional work no one will deny; but as it was done without any directions either from the Commissioners or the Architect, the contractors can have no legal claim whatever for it - hence it becomes a question whether the county would be justifiable in receiving from the contractors that which beautifies it, and consequently renders it more valuable, without making some compensation. - This is however a question that must be settled wholly by yourselves, and I will

only venture to suggest whether it would not be justice to all parties to allow the iron windows that were left out of the front to ballance the extra work the contractors put upon it - their charge for extra work is \$1201.11, and I find the Iron windows to be worth \$609.92 - this however as I said before is a matter entirely for your decision

10. Granite window heads and sills. - These items are also of advantage to the building, although they were un-ordered either by the commissioner or the Architect, it therefore remains with you to say whether they shall be paid for or not - the power is in your own hands
11. Door and window heads and sills for back of building; these are also under the same circumstances; wooden ones would have answered, and these are neither ordered nor in the contract; the building is however better of having them, but the Commissioners are by no means bound to pay for them.
12. Extra work digging and removing dirt in yard - if this earth came out of the foundations, or has been made by the work, the contractors should remove it without charge but if it was originally on the lot, it belongs to the county to take it away.

We have now the Third division of the bill to consider which consists of such items as are really extras; it commences with number

13. Curb stones and setting - This was an after order by the commissioners - the price is reasonable
14. Extra work on step and cheek blocks; in consequence of a resolution of the Board to make a greater elevation to the building after the contract was made
15. Building out Kitchen - This relates altogether to the additional Kitchen - the charges are correct, and the over is not included, an appendage of that kind being in the contract
16. is the culvery; this also is a correct charge
17. includes all the paving beyond that named in the contract and is principally caused by the additional Kitchen
18. Making cellar door all of which is extra.
19. Forcing pump and appurtenances, which is also extra and directed to be paid by the Commissioners
20. Extra work on large gate, explained in the 5th item
21. Rain water cistern, an after consideration and of course an extra
22. extra work on cupola - This work was ordered to be done by all the Commissioners with the Architect under the impression that it belonged to the Contract; - but upon reflection I find that the cupolas of the Phila. Prisons, which were the patterns as regards finish,

- for this, are both unplastered, and in as rough a state as we found that on our Prison when we ordered a better finish to be given to it.
23. Stairs in Debtors Apartment - This was an alteration of the Plan, and of course an extra
 24. Lightning rod, cleaning well, digging &c connected with additional Kitchen, and extra window in kitchen all of these charges are really extras - the window in the kitchen which wants perhaps the most explanation, takes the place of the door, and the door is where the oven was to have been
 25. Extra work on 39 doors - These doors were to have had each 4 pannels, but when I come to examine the Lumber which by the way was the best in the market, I was fearful that it would shrink and warp, and to prevent such a result I gave directions to have these doors all made in 6 equal panels to give them greater strength; the charge is therefore correct and reasonable
 26. Pipes connected with the rain water cistern, all of which is additional to the contract
 27. Painting roof and chimneys - this was ordered to be done to render the roof more durable, and it constitutes a proper extra charge
 28. hanging or swinging gates in basement windows - the contract calls for straight bars in these windows, but gates to open were afterwards ordered and of course are extra
 29. Irons to fasten the roof on the yard wall - upon reflection I find this item to be strictly correct: - the contract specifies 8 feet between the irons which is the distance we have them apart in the city; but when these irons were being placed on the walls at this distance I became apprehensive that the greater exposure here would probably give the wind such an influence on them as to tear them off: and the roof being also heavier than those in Phila furnished additional reasons for greater precaution, I therefore ordered an iron for every intermediate space, which renders this charge a correct one

There yet remains to be done before the Prison is entirely completed, the repaving of the corridor; the plastering of the inside of the air chambers, and some slight changes in the furnaces; also the painting of the front door, the fixing of the cords to the skylights, the fastenings of the cell windows and the plugs to the ventilators

I believe all the work to be done in the best possible manner, and the contracts to have been most faithfully executed. The building is as good a one as could be

made for the purpose, the arrangements for supplying the Prisoners with water, and the water closets are perfect in their execution, and the performance of the furnaces is beyond what we could expect in the present state of the building: - the cells on the west side are now as well warmed as will ever be desirable, but the eastern ones require an increase in the funnel which supplies cold air, and they too will be amply warmed

It will be proper for me here to remark that upon careful calculation I find the main items charged by the contractors as extras are put down at cost

All of which is respectfully submitted
by Your Ob. Serv

Tho. U. Walter Arch

To the Commissioners of Chester County Pa.

/Original manuscript in possession of the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

8. "At a meeting of the Commissioners of Chester County held Feby. 18. 1840 in conjunction with Messrs. Ingram & Jeffris contractors for the erection of a New County Prison in West Chester it was agreed unanimously by both parties after great deliberation that a compromise of the extra charges should be made so as to allow \$1900- dollars over and above the contract which it is understood will be in full for all extra demands whatever; - it is further understood by both parties that if any part of the work should prove defective, the Contractory bind themselves to make it perfect at their own expense-The Commissioners also agree to receive the building from the Contractors this day

Tho. U. Walter Arch

Feby 18. 1840"

/From original manuscript in possession of the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa./

9. "PROGRESSING.- The work of building an addition to our county Prison is going on finely, under the supervising of Mr. D. H. Taylor, and will in a few weeks be completed. The new addition comprises eighteen new cells and other improvements. The stonework has been done by Mr. John Coburn, the brick laying by Messrs. Taylor & Hampton, and the carpenter work by Mr. Joseph Hunt, Col. H. R. Guss & Son furnishing the brick. Although the fact of our authorities being obliged to make this addition is not calculated to inspire us with a pride for diminishing evils, we nevertheless feel proud of the improvement, as we always do in

anything pertaining to add to the comforts of those who may desire to make our Borough a transcient home."

/Jeffersonian, West Chester, Pa., August 26, 1871.]

10.

"Our Prison Improvements

The improvements in the way of remodeling some of the departments of our prison, which have been in progress for some few weeks past, are fast nearing completion, and will, in a few days more, be successfully concluded.

The changes consist of making three stairways, - one leading from the dining room of the keeper's dwelling department to the second story - the second to the cellar, and the third to the attic or lookout on the top of the building. The oven has been removed to the kitchen apartment of the prison proper, which is located on the western wing of the structure, which change has left a very neat and commodious kitchen for the uses of the keeper's family, in the eastern wing, which heretofore has been devoted to the oven and boilers. This new order of things is a decided improvement and the workmanship is very creditable. The carpenter work deserves special mention, both for its fine finish and for the fact of its being accomplished by one of the prisoners - Jones by name. On the second floor immediately over the dining room a very complete bath room for private uses has been fitted up, in which some of T. P. Apple's first class plumbing is exhibited. On the other side of the building, in the oven room the Palmer Bros., have displayed their work in the same creditable manner.

This change when completed, will influence a dedication of two rooms - one on the first story and the other on the second, immediately above - for the storage of carpets. By this change customers having business in the carpet department will not be brought in contact with the prison cooks in the kitchen, as is the case at present. In each of the yards, on the east and west sides of the prison, a large reflector is placed against the opposite wall fronting the cell extension of the building. These reflectors are kept lighted during each and every night after 10 o'clock, and which floods the yards with light, thus affording assistance to the night watchman to detect any demonstration that, might be made during the nighttime, on the part of the prisoners.

The whole improvement is one to be commended, and will not only insure a greater degree of comfort to the Warden and his family but will also afford the assistant keepers a more perfect control over the entire building."

/Daily Local News, West Chester, Pa., July 13, 1874.]

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This building, designed by Thomas U. Walter, is one of the few American prisons in Greek Revival style and has interesting architectural details rendered carefully in permanent materials.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: South facade is about one-hundred six feet (c. 106') on Market Street. The main block is about forty-four feet (c. 44') deep, wings about twenty-four feet (c. 24') deep. Center section, three stories; side wings, two stories.
2. Foundations: Stone (see copy of specifications, Part I, C).
3. Wall construction: Stone (see copy of specifications, Part I, C).
4. Porches: Monumental entrance vestibule on south front with projecting center bay flanked by two classical columns and the whole enframed by large rusticated granite piers.
5. Chimneys: Original.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Few obvious changes in old parts that are open to the public. Original floor plans not found. Exterior doors are generally double wooden doors with iron studding and hinging.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Few obvious changes in old parts that are open to the public. Original floor plans not found. The windows of the south front are for the most part six-over-six or three-over-three light double-hung sash windows. Unornamented flat sills and lintels enframe each window on the south front. The cell windows are generally three light casement windows.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Low pitch gable roof, constructed of seamed metal.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Seems original, very plain with a large untreated architrave and curiously flat dentils.

- c. Dormers, cupolas: No dormers. One very interesting octagonal cupola. Walter used a similar device on the Chester County Court House, the Villa Maria Convent in West Chester and had planned one for the Presbyterian Church in West Chester. (Lack of funds prevented this from being erected.) This cupola is discussed in G. Carroll Lindsay's thesis listed under Part I, A, 6.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Three stories in center block; two stories in each of the side wings. There seem to have been few obvious changes in the old section. The warden's quarters are situated in the east two-story wing. There are offices in the main block and the west wing, with kitchens in the rear of the main wing.
2. Stairways: Appear original; see specifications for details (under Part I, C of this report). Additions were made in 1874 (see clipping under Part I, C of this report).
3. Flooring: Appears original (see Part I, C of this report).
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster (see Part I, C).
5. Doorways and doors: The frames are original; also some doors are original. The cell doors are wooden with iron hinges.
6. Trim: Much original remains; marble fireplaces remain in the reception areas (see Part I, C).
7. Hardware: Some original, but considerable changes. Heavy iron straphinges and box locks are used for the cells (see Part I, C).
8. Lighting: Modern electricity has always been in existence in the prison but more modern appliances have been installed.
9. Heating: Fireplaces remain; building heating system changed (see Part I, C).

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Buildings are to the sidewalk line on the south front and west side.
2. Enclosures: Enclosed by stone wall except for south front center where the buildings themselves are in line with the walls.

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